

TARGETED PROPERTIES UNDER THE RHODE ISLAND REFUGE COMPLEX LAND PROTECTION PLAN (LLP)

Tuesday, May 14, 2002

The Land Protection Plan (LPP) for the Rhode Island Refuge Complex identifies a number of ecologically valuable properties that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) hopes to purchase and add to the state's five existing national wildlife refuges. The following is a list of three high-priority properties being targeted by the FWS.

John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge at Pettaquamscutt Cove

Women's Development Corporation (Town of Narragansett): This 37 acre parcel contains the headwaters of a tributary to the Narrow River and current refuge lands. Water quality within and adjacent to the Refuge is of high concern to State and Local Governments. Acquiring this portion of the watershed will provide significant and long lasting protection and will help maintain and promote enhancement of water quality in the estuary. This parcel contains a series of vernal pools, maple swamps, and other wetland features which are of limited supply and support a wide variety of natural resource treasures including amphibians, migratory songbirds, and wetland dependant wildlife.

Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge

Third beach property (Town of Middletown): This 25 acre parcel contains a diversity of coastal habitats and abuts current refuge lands. Roughly a third of the property encompasses the northern portion of a saltmarsh (Southern portion in current refuge lands) important for such species as the sharptailed sparrow (a species of high concern) and a wide variety of waterfowl and shorebirds. Another portion of the property includes dune and beach strand habitats used by a variety of migratory and resident shorebirds, and includes potential nesting habitat for the threatened piping plover. The remaining portions of the property contain adjacent shrub dominated uplands important to the several thousand migratory songbirds which pass along Rhode Islands Coastline each spring and fall.

Block Island National Wildlife Refuge

Sandy Point property (Town of New Shoreham): This 10-acre parcel abuts current National Wildlife Refuge lands on the North end of Block Island. This parcel, currently administered by the US Coast Guard (may become available if determined excess to Coast Guard Needs) contains key dune and beach strand habitat used by Piping Plovers (Threatened Species) for nesting and by a unique diversity of shorebirds including least terns and oystercatchers. This sand spit has a high potential to enhance foraging and resting habitat for the numerous migratory shorebirds and waterfowl. It is a destination fishing spot which the Service would maintain.